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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MATT SHAKMAN NAMED ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

LOS ANGELES, CA (August 21, 2017) – Acclaimed theater, film and television director Matt Shakman has been named Artistic Director of the Geffen Playhouse, the non-profit theater’s Board of Directors announced today.

Shakman, a veteran director whose work spans stages on both coasts and the screen, will work alongside the Geffen’s Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr. to stage new work and revivals of classic plays with a focus on exceptional storytelling and audience experience. He will join the Geffen staff and begin the work of building the 2018/2019 season on September 20.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Co-Chairs Martha Henderson and Pamela Robinson said, “We are thrilled to welcome Matt Shakman to the Geffen Playhouse as our new Artistic Director. After a comprehensive nationwide search, Matt clearly emerged as our first choice. His unique artistic vision, coupled with his directorial and entertainment business experience, makes him an outstanding cultural fit for our theater. He and Gil Cates, Jr. make an incredibly powerful team to lead the Geffen into the future.”

“I am delighted to welcome Matt to the Geffen,” said Cates. “His passion for extraordinary storytelling, his strong relationships with artists in theater, film and television, and his commitment to fostering community will be immensely valuable as we continue to advance the mission of the theater.”

Shakman’s relationship with the Geffen Playhouse began in 2012 when he directed the West Coast Premiere of David Lindsay-Abaire’s Tony Award-nominated *Good People*, followed by Jeffrey Hatcher’s World Premiere adaptation of Frederick Knott’s *Wait Until Dark* in 2013. Most recently, he helmed the Geffen’s hit production of Joshua Harmon’s Off-Broadway comedy *Bad Jews* during its blockbuster 2014/2015 season.

Commented Shakman, “As a long-standing admirer of the Geffen—both for the high-quality work that it produces and for the amazing community it has cultivated with audiences and artists alike—I am thrilled to take on the exciting opportunity of growing the reach of the theater and nurturing the inclusive values that are so essential to its success. It’s a dream come true to join such a vibrant cultural institution.”

Shakman founded Los Angeles' Black Dahlia Theatre and served as its artistic director from its inception in 2001. Under his leadership, the theater was named one of "a dozen young American companies you need to know" by *American Theatre* magazine and "Best Small Theatre" by *Los Angeles* magazine. Productions such as *Hey, Morgan*, *Theatre District*, *Nocturne* and *Orson's Shadow* garnered numerous Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle and LA Stage Alliance nominations and awards. In 2011, the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle awarded Shakman the Milton Katselas Award for Career Achievement in Direction.

Shakman will continue to direct for television and film while serving in his new role. He recently helmed two season 7 episodes of HBO's *Game of Thrones* and is a director and producer for FX's long-running *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* series. His directing credits also include episodes of *The Good Wife*, *Fargo* and *Mad Men*.

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ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Co-Chairs of the Board Martha Henderson and Pamela Robinson. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts. www.geffenplayhouse.org

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